



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**VALLEY FORWARD INTRODUCES THE PEDESTRIAN FREEWAY
PASSPORT FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION ENTHUSIASTS**

An Interactive Web Site is First to Showcase Current, Planned and Needed Trails in the Valley

PHOENIX (October 26, 2007) — On Friday, October 26, Valley Forward Association will introduce the first-ever trails Passport and interactive Web site to promote “The Valley’s Pedestrian Freeway – A Priceless Necklace of Trails and Gems.” The vision was originally conceived by the business-based environmental public interest group three years ago.

In an effort to showcase non-motorized areas for hiking, biking, horseback riding and other outdoor activities, the Pedestrian Freeway facilitates connectivity among Valley communities while enhancing livability and sustainability of the rapidly expanding metropolitan region. Throughout the weekend, beginning on October 26, the public is invited to participate in a number of outdoor recreation events, including a Valley Forward hike, to celebrate the years of planning and advocacy in reaching this occasion.

“While Valley Forward is known for local business and civic leadership involvement, we launched the Pedestrian Freeway as a means for public action to support our beautiful trails and recreation corridors,” said Diane Brossart, president of Valley Forward Association. “The Passport and Web site highlight current and planned trails, as well as gaps in the system. Our goal is to generate community and political support to close these trails gaps and make it possible to tour the Valley’s most prominent regional destinations – community gems - without having to get in a car.”

The project identifies “gems” within each community, such local destinations as Camelback Mountain, Indian Bend Wash, Rio Salado and the Riparian Preserve at Water Ranch. The organization aims to facilitate physical connections between Valley communities and these signature public amenities. The Pedestrian Freeway links the gems with trailheads and paths in the cities and towns that make up Maricopa County. The Web site provides an interactive view of the Passport utilizing state-of-the-art Google Earth technology. This tool allows Valley residents to visually see each trail via satellite and obtain useful information about recreational amenities.

(more)

Add 1/Pedestrian Freeway

Copies of the Passport and information about the Web site will be available to the public on Saturday, October 27, at Piestewa Peak in Phoenix. Valley Forward will deliver brief remarks about the project at 8 a.m. and then invite residents to hike the mountain. Throughout the day, Passports will be distributed to visitors and hikers at the trailhead.

Valley Forward will also distribute Passports at the Phoenix Outdoor Recreation Festival at South Mountain Park and the West Valley Recreation Corridor: Walk the Vision event in Glendale on Sunday, October 28.

The Passport project was made possible through the partnership of Valley communities. Major sponsors include the cities of Chandler and Phoenix, as well as the landscape architectural firm of EPG. Additional support was generated from the cities of Apache Junction, Scottsdale and Tempe, as well as Maricopa County. Private sector participation included GEC, an environmental consulting company, and the law firm of Gust Rosenfeld. Donations were also received from Audubon Arizona and Steve and Laurel Arndt.

For additional information on “The Valley’s Pedestrian Freeway – A Priceless Necklace of Trails and Gems,” call (602) 240-2408.

Valley Forward Association is a non-profit organization that brings business and civic leaders together to convene thoughtful public dialogue on regional issues and to promote cooperative efforts to improve the environment and quality of life in the Valley.